



SAVE THE FRANKLIN BATTLEFIELD

March 2005

www.franklin-stfb.org

Dedicated to the Preservation, Protection, and Promotion of Civil War Sites in Williamson County, Tennessee

Dear STFB member—

Many of you have already heard about the historic vote by the City of Franklin Board of Mayor and Aldermen to fund \$2.5 million towards the purchase of 112 acres of core battlefield along Lewisburg Pike, and near Collins Farm, to establish a battlefield park here at Franklin.

Many of us look back at the County's decision to build their new library on the BGA property as the inevitable but regrettable "bottoming out" of our hopes and desires for preservation of the Franklin Battlefield. It does seem like things sometimes have to "hit rock bottom" before they improve.

I think we will one day look back at the Board of Mayor and Aldermen's vote to reclaim and preserve this portion of the Franklin Battlefield as the point when we "turned the corner," when our citizens and our local government joined together in understanding the need to save the Franklin Battlefield. I believe this will be the precedent to obtain other properties and to continue to "grow" our battlefield sites here in Franklin and Williamson County.

Your support—your time, your letters of support, your donations, and your membership—has been instrumental for us to turn this corner together. I hope you will enjoy the satisfaction of sharing in this victory, and will find renewal of strength for all that yet remains to be done.

Most sincerely,

Joe Smyth

Valley Corps Confederate Volunteers Make Gift to STFB

Tony Seiberlich, treasurer of 2nd Virginia, Co. F wrote to convey a \$500 gift to STFB for the preservation and continuation of the Franklin Battlefield. This group is based in Salem, Wisconsin and has donated to STFB projects for 3 years in a row now. We greatly appreciate their steadfast support. Members of this group have visited Franklin over the years, some more than once, and are good friends of STFB and of the Franklin Battlefield.

Battle of Thompson's Station Tour

On Saturday April 16th, Save The Franklin Battlefield will lead a tour of the Battle of Thompson's Station. The tour, our first of 2005, will commence at 2:00 p.m. from the Thompson's Station train depot.

On March 5, 1863 at the Battle of Thompson's Station, a strong Federal force of 1,500 troops had left Franklin to reconnoiter and forage for food toward Columbia. They encountered and were surrounded by General Van Dorn's cavalry under W. H. Jackson and Nathan Bedford Forrest. The Federal cavalry escaped, but infantry with a battery of artillery was forced to surrender.

This first STFB tour of 2005 will be led by STFB board members. New information on this battle has come to light and will be incorporated into the tour. In addition, period military reenactors will relate first person accounts of the battle.

As always, this tour is free to STFB members. Tickets for the general public are \$5.00 and \$2.00 for students and children. For more information, please call the STFB office at (615) 500-6612.

Living History at Fort Granger Park, Saturday, April 2, 2005

Sponsored by Franklin City Parks
Hosted by 5th Kentucky Infantry, C.S.A. & 20th Tennessee Infantry, C.S.A. Reenactors

9:00 a.m. – park opens to public for viewing of camp life and equipment usage in 1862

11:00 a.m. - flag presentation and ceremony in Fort Granger

12:00 noon – history of Ft. Granger to be given by local participants and army period drill

1:00 to 4:00 p.m. a view of soldier's life and army drill; the camp will be open and visitors will again have an opportunity to see, first hand, the daily life and activities of Civil War soldiers, 1861 – 1865.

**THANK YOU, AS ALWAYS, FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF STFB...
WE WELCOME ANY QUESTIONS, COMMENTS OR
SUGGESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT US @ www.franklin-stfb.org**

Franklin Aldermen vote to match Battlefield Park funds

By Gregory L. Wade

FRANKLIN, Tn—On March 8, by a 7-1 margin, the Franklin Board of Aldermen and Mayor approved a measure to provide support to purchase land for a battlefield park in Franklin, Tennessee. The 110 acres in question is now occupied by the Country Club of Franklin and owned by Rod and Kay Heller of Washington D.C. Rod Heller, a descendant of the McGavock family who owned the Carnton Mansion located near the site, had offered the ground to preservationists for a price tag of \$5 million dollars if the funds could be raised by June of 2005. This land makes up the eastern flank of the November 30th, 1864 battle which virtually destroyed the Army of Tennessee as an effective fighting force. It is one of the last large tracts of pristine battlefield acreage available in the rapidly growing town. Franklin's mayor, Tom Miller, had offered to match a private fund raising effort of 2.5 million with Franklin's own 2.5 million match if it passed the city's board of aldermen vote.

Franklin's Charge, a coalition of local preservation groups, answered the challenge and began a fund raising effort in 2004 confident the match would be voted in. But there was some doubt. In a sometimes heated public forum lasting over an hour several spoke against the use of city funds in this endeavor. Citing concerns about budgetary issues resident Bob Belterman said, "I don't want see the city waste their money. We're talking about a field of dreams." Homeowners in the vicinity of the proposed park cited concerns about additional traffic as well as the potential for higher taxes in order to maintain the property. Chris Jackson, president of a local homeowners association asked the board, "What are we signing up for after the 2.5 million match?" Opposition leader Mike Benton argued that the ground to be saved is not "core" battlefield to the average citizen. "To me core battlefield is eye to eye and hand to hand fighting," he said.

But Franklin's Charge turned out in mass dominating the packed meeting room with speaker after speaker sharing statistics and facts about what took place on the land and the benefit of a battlefield park. Julian Bibb, a local attorney and leader of the effort answered the main concerns from the opposition point by point. Citing the argument that the area in question is not "core" battlefield, he noted a letter signed by 14 nationally known historians in support of the lands preservation. Discussing the potential for grants for archeological study and park construction he told the board, "tonight you have a rare opportunity to honor the singular most important event in the history of our city." Echoing the sentiments of many of the speakers, Fred Prouty of the Tennessee Wars Commission said, "I find it astonishing anyone could not find this land significant and worthy of saving."

Actress Ashley Judd who lives in Franklin said she came to the meeting after reading about the effort to save the land in the *New York Times*. "This is a national story," she said. "We have something precious and dear in Franklin, Our green space needs to be saved."

The only vote against the proposal came from Alderman Tom Feuerborn who cited the lack of a long term "plan" as his biggest concern. "Before we spend two million dollars of the taxpayers money, I need to see a better plan for the future management of a park," he said.

While there are still formalities before the process is final, local observers see the match as done. If 10% of the registered voters ask for a referendum then the process will continue but it would be difficult with the June deadline looming. Now, the preservation community must come up with their 2.5 million of the deal. "We will get this done," says Robert Hicks of Franklin's Charge. "We are making great progress."



A VIEW OF THE DAMAGE AFTER THE REMOVAL OF THE TREE

"What a Mess!"

"What a mess!" was Sam Huffman's appraisal as he surveyed the damage from the 90-foot-tall pecan tree that had crushed the kitchen wing of the Collins' Farmhouse.

Once the huge tree was removed, what we had assumed was light damage to the historic section of the house proved to be much more serious. The impact of the falling tree on the ridge line had shoved the roof down and forced the sidewalls to bulge. Some of the rafters are broken and part of the upstairs floor is sagging. But the old Collins' house appears to be restorable.

STFB is in the process of having some restoration contractors assess the damage to the house, suggest how to restore it, and give cost estimates. To a large extent, rebuilding options depend upon the insurance settlement. Possible options that are under consideration are: (1) Replacing the kitchen wing and repairing the historic part of the house bringing the structure back to its appearance before the storm; (2) Repairing the historic house and building a kitchen in the STFB storage area instead of replacing the kitchen wing; (3) Beginning restoration to the 1867 appearance by repairing the historic house, removing the STFB storage area and the room above it, and adding a utility room to connect the old house to the undamaged wing.

New & Renewing Members Feb. 2005

Rory McIntyre	Columbus, OH
Robert M Hearin Jr	New Orleans, LA
Jonathan B Bower	Colchester, CT
Bertille S Owen	Bon Aqua, TN
Matthew Hooks	Brackenridge, PA
Theodore & Vickie Taylor	Summer Shade, KY
John G Henderson	Nashville, TN
Tom Yearby	Shreveport, LA
Paul Arch	Coraopolis, PA
Jerry G Hughes Jr	Old Hickory, TN
Brian Ruxton	Elmhurst, IL
Union Veterans Union	Fair Oaks, CA
Tom Potter Family	Murfreesboro, TN
Patricia Knapp	Nashville, TN
John & Tracey Guimelli	Burpengary, Australia

News In Review

Gordon pushing for military tourism group – *The Gallatin News Examiner* – 2/05 – MURFREESBORO – U.S. Rep. Bart Gordon of Tennessee is pushing to create a Congressional Battle field Caucus that would focus on preserving the nation's military history. The Democratic congressman said the group would help build awareness of military heritage and promote tourism to battlefields from the wars fought on U.S. soil. In 1996, Congress approved legislation introduced by Gordon creating the Tennessee Civil War Heritage Area to promote economic development and tourism across the state.

Franklin battlefield makes threat list again – *Franklin Review Appeal* – 2/24/05 – FRANKLIN – Franklin has been named one of the country's 10 most endangered battlefields for the third year in a row by the Civil War Preservation Trust, a national battlefield preservation group. "Franklin has long been one of the most important Civil War sites in the country that's been least protected and over the years, Franklin has become a poster child for what not to do with your history," said Jim Campi, director of policy and communications for the CWPT. "But in recent years, there's sort of been a re-awakening. . . reclaiming the battlefield."

Spring Hill Civil War site makes 'at risk' list – *The Tennessean*, "Williamson A.M." – 2/28/05 – SPRING HILL – The Spring Hill Battlefield is one of 15 national battlefields listed as "at Risk" by the Civil War Preservation Trust. According to historians, Spring Hill was the scene of a bloody battle that left hundreds of men killed, wounded or captured on Nov. 29, 1864, the day before the devastating Battle of Franklin.

Walton: Keep Fleming Hall facade, raze homes – *Franklin Review Appeal* – 3/2/05 – FRANKLIN – County commissioners, preservationists, Civil War enthusiasts—everybody, it seems, has an idea of what should be done with the old Battle Ground Academy campus. County Commissioner Jack Walton says he has a plan, one he is ready to present to the property committee next month. His plan would include: Tearing down Fleming Hall—the former BGA building—except for the facade Tearing down some of the five county-owned house in disrepair and put others up for auction Turning the old library into a museum or another profitable venture for the county The creation of a passive park area. By eliminating some of the old buildings, Walton said the county could open up the property for the construction of an arts center, a building for the school system, or any other educational or historical project the county wished to undertake.

Resident want to hear whinnying at park, not baseball bats cracking – *The Tennessean*, "Williamson A.M." – 3/3/05 – FRANKLIN – The wish list from residents at a public hearing this

week on plans for Harlinsdale Farm included everything from keeping horses there to honoring Civil War troops who crossed the property during the Battle of Franklin. City Parks Director Lisa Clayton assured residents she doesn't intend to put things like baseball fields and tennis courts on the property, and that the theme of this park will be much more passive.

Little downtown graveyards the final home of city's earliest leaders – *Franklin Review Appeal* – 3/3/05 – FRANKLIN – Buried inside the two cemeteries that sit on either side of Fourth Avenue, North, are some of Franklin's early settlers and greatest heroes. In Rest Haven Cemetery, perhaps the best known buried from the Civil War era is Capt. Tod Carter. Other post-Civil War leaders include Dr. Daniel Cliffe, who was a respected physician, Confederate surgeon and president of the Nashville and Decatur Railroad. Gen James P. Brownlow married Belle Cliffe and both are buried in Rest Haven.

City Ok's money for Civil War fort – *The Tennessean* – 3/7/05 – Clarksville – The Clarksville City Council has tentatively approved providing money for the restoration of Fort Defiance. The council voted 6-4 on first reading to give \$100,000 to the group working on the Civil War-era Fort Defiance. Approval on a second reading would be required for the decision to be final.

Battle sites such as Shy's Hill are jewels in our historic crown – *The Tennessean* – 3/10/05 – Nashville – Fort Negley, now partially restored, is available to visitors with interest in Civil War History, especially what happened in Nashville. The crest of Shy's Hill may well be another appropriate site to be developed into a place to commemorate the valor of the men of both sides during that day of hell. Shy's Hill is a remnant that is indeed a jewel. Here was the heart of the battle. When it fell, the battle was over. The war was done. Nothing of moment happened after the Battle of Nashville except the quiet surrender at Appomattox.

This was a busy week for both growth and preservation: Harrison House overlay - Battlefield grant – *Franklin Review Appeal* – 3/12/05 – FRANKLIN – Add a historic overlay district over the Harrison House on Columbia Avenue, which is owned by Alderman Pam Lewis. The Harrison House played an important role in the Nov. 30, 1864, Battle of Franklin — The Civil War Preservation Trust wants to apply for a \$500,000 National Park Service grant to help toward the private sector's fund raising for purchase of the Country Club of Franklin's property. The City would act as a go-between and any grant money would go to the private community's work to raise their \$2.5 million share for the property.

Carter House Calendar – *The Tennessean*, "Franklin Life" – 3/10/05 – Nashville – The Carter House has several event planned for the coming months. The first is Park Day scheduled for April 2, 2005. Volunteers will participate in projects such as painting, cutting branches, raking, and mowing grass to help maintain the Carter House and grounds. In June and July, children ages 7-12 will have the chance to participate in two camps to be held on the Carter House grounds. The first is the annual Civilian Camp that will be held on June 10th and 11th. The annual Military Camp will be held on July 22nd and 23rd. In August, the Carter House will feature a Living History Program with living historians portraying the 5th Confederate Division.

Local Wal-Mart Provides Gift

Last fall, the management team of the Super Wal-Mart Store on Malory Lane sponsored a nomination to the Wal-Mart Foundation for support of STFB and its projects. In January, we received a \$1000 gift from the Wal-Mart Foundation for our land fund. A big, big thanks to the local Wal-Mart team for providing this very important help to STFB.

Save the Franklin Battlefield Membership / Renewal / Order Form

Name(s) _____
 Address _____ City _____
 State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____ E-mail _____

QTY	ITEM	PRICE EACH	TOTAL
	Annual Membership: Individual \$20 ~ Family \$30 ~ Corporate \$50 (circle one)		
	Donation: Marker Fund ~ Land Purchase (circle one)		
	1999 & 2000 Day By Day Civil War Calendar Set	\$5.00	
	"Retreat from Pulaski to Nashville" ~ limited & numbered reprint edition, hardcover	\$20.00	
	Commemorative Belt Buckle	\$10.00	
	NEW!! ~ Battle of Franklin Map ~ laminated & in full color	\$6.00	
	Save The Franklin Battlefield Bumpersticker	\$1.50	
	"Eyewitness to the Battle of Franklin" ~ David Logsdon, paperback	\$12.00	
	"Eyewitness to the Battle of Shiloh" ~ David Logsdon, paperback	\$12.00	
	"Eyewitness to the Battle of Ft. Donalson" ~ David Logsdon, paperback	\$12.00	
	"Eyewitness to the Battle of Stones River" ~ David Logsdon, paperback	\$12.00	
	NEW!! ~ "Eyewitness to the Battle of Nashville" ~ David Logsdon, paperback	\$12.00	
	<i>Cleburne or Forrest</i> Prints, signed by the artist (circle one ~ or both for \$30)	\$20.00	
	ORDER SUBTOTAL		
	SHIPPING & HANDLING (items only) ~ under 10.00	\$1.00	
	\$10 to 24.99	\$2.95	
	\$25 and up	\$4.50	
	ORDER TOTAL		

Mail To: Save The Franklin Battlefield ~ P.O. Box 851 ~ Franklin, TN 37065-0851
 STFB Membership is annual, donations are tax deductible.

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